

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1211

As Passed House:
March 9, 2005

Title: An act relating to deer and elk hunting.

Brief Description: Concerning a multiple season big game permit.

Sponsors: By Representatives Blake, B. Sullivan, Buck, Kretz, Eickmeyer and Armstrong; by request of Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks: 2/3/05, 2/4/05 [DP];

Finance: 2/23/05, 2/28/05 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/9/05, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Grants the Fish and Wildlife Commission with the authority to offer a multiple season big game permit that allows the holder to hunt deer or elk during more than one general hunting season.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, ECOLOGY & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives B. Sullivan, Chair; Upthegrove, Vice Chair; Buck, Ranking Minority Member; Kretz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Blake, DeBolt, Dickerson, Eickmeyer, Hunt, Orcutt and Williams.

Staff: Jason Callahan (786-7117).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives McIntire, Chair; Hunter, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Roach, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Conway, Ericksen, Hasegawa and Santos.

Staff: Mark Matteson (786-7145).

Background:

In most instances, a license issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is required in order for a person to hunt or fish for recreational purposes. Hunting for deer or elk requires a big game license, issued by the Department, and allows the holder to take and transport one animal. A big game license allows a hunter to participate in one of three general hunting seasons: archery, muzzleloader, or modern firearm. The dates of the general seasons are established by the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission).

The Department offers a number of different hunting combination license packages. These licenses allow hunters to hunt for more than one species during a year, such as deer, elk, bear, or cougar. Prices for the combination packages range from \$36 for residents to \$660 for non-residents. Revenue from the sale of hunting licenses are deposited into the State Wildlife Fund.

Summary of Bill:

The Commission is authorized to offer permits to hunt deer or elk during multiple general hunting seasons, which includes modern firearm season, archery season, and muzzleloader season. The permit only allows the holder to take one deer or elk each year, regardless of which season the animal is taken.

The fee for the multiple season big game permit is \$150 for Washington residents, and \$1,500 for non-residents. Revenues from the sales of the permits will be deposited into the State Wildlife Fund.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) This is an opportunity to produce revenue that can be used for wildlife management, which is revenue that is needed by the state. At the same time, the bill is consistent with the wishes of most in the hunting community, who want more opportunities to spend time in the field. This will be a voluntary program for hunters to participate in, and the Fish and Wildlife Commission will be conservative in the number of permits it issues to make sure the new program does not have a negative effect on wildlife populations. The actual number of permits issued will be determined by state biologists. The Department did a lot of outreach work in developing this legislation.

Testimony For: (Finance) This bill represents a limited effort to allow people to participate in more than one general hunting season. The revenues that would be gained from the new fees would be used for wildlife management.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife supports this legislation as a means of providing an additional opportunity to hunters. This proposal has been supported by hunters as a way to

extend their season. New revenues will be used to monitor harvest rates and modify permit application programs in our automated licensing program.

The National Wild Turkey Federation supports the bill, but would like to see the wording with respect to type of license clarified.

Testimony Against: (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) None.

Testimony Against: (Finance) None.

Persons Testifying: (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) Representative Blake, prime sponsor; Steve Pozzenghera and Dave Ware, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Ed Owens, Hunters Heritage Council.

Persons Testifying: (Finance) Representative Blake, prime sponsor; Bob Wherrett, National Wild Turkey Council; and Dave Ware, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks) None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: (Finance) None.